

REMARKS

Claims 1-17 are pending. The Office Action rejects claims 1-10 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b); and rejects claims 11-16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a).

Applicants appreciate the courtesies extended by Examiner Nguyen to Applicants' representative during the personal interview conducted on April 26, 2007. Applicants' separate record of the substance of the interview is incorporated into the following Remarks.

I. Rejections Under §102

The Office Action rejects claims 1-10 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by Jaeger (U.S. 5,841,428; hereafter "'428"). The Office Action asserts that '428 discloses each feature of instant claims 1-10 and 17. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

'428 discloses a simple knob rotated about an axis. See col. 17, lines 1-35. Figs. 40 and 41 specifically show that Hall effect sensors are positioned at locations 90° apart relative to the axis of the knob. See col. 17, lines 0-40. These sensors detect the angular setting of the knob and enable the generation of control signals that vary in response to turning the knob. Microprocessor 111 is programmed to detect the strength and other characteristics of output signals from these sensors. See col. 18, lines 43-59. Nowhere, however, does '428 disclose "an operation member drive control means for driving the operation member at least in a one-dimensional direction" as claimed.

In contrast, instant claim 1, from which claims 2-10 and 17 depend, recites "operation member drive control means for driving the operation member." As shown in instant Fig. 3, driving section 20 electromagnetically drives the operation member 12 so as to convey a reactive force to the user operating the operating member 12. This movement occurs, for example, due to the application of current to magnets arranged in a case around the drive operation member 12. For a full discussion, see pages 14 and 15 of the specification, as filed. This feature is nowhere disclosed, expressly or inherently, in '428.

For at least the foregoing reasons, independent claim 1, and claims 2-10 and 17 depending therefrom, are not anticipated by '428 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are earnestly solicited.

II. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

A. The Office Action rejects claims 11, 13 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over '428 in view of Jaeger et al. (U.S. 6,642,919; hereinafter "'919"). The Office Action asserts that '428 teaches each claimed feature except for the operation member drive control means as provided on the display screen; the operation member drive control means with at least 2° of freedom; and the operation member drive control means driving the operation member along a plane in a two-dimensional direction which is substantially parallel to the display screen. It would thus allegedly have been obvious to have combined '428 with '919 in order to obtain the claimed features. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

'428 does not teach, nor does it suggest, all of the limitations of at least instant claim 1 for the reasons cited above. Further, '919 discloses control devices such as rotary knob devices, joy sticks or sliding cap control devices; however, none of these devices involve member drive control means for driving the operation member. See '919 at col. 17, lines 10-15. For example, joy stick 112 has a post is deflected by the operator in order to generate a direction identifying control signal by control signal producing circuits 126. This configuration enables identification of the direction of the deflection of the joystick. See col. 17, lines 27-43. Nowhere does '919 teach or suggest, nor would it have rendered obvious, a "member drive control means for driving the operation member."

In contrast, instant claim 1, from which claims 11, 13 and 14 depend, includes drive control means for driving the operation member. In other words, claim 1 does not merely include control devices actuated by an operator, but rather member drive control means for driving the operation member itself. Nowhere is this feature taught or suggested by, nor

would it have been obvious over the combination of '428 in view of '919 because '428 and '919 would not have obtained the claimed features.

B. The Office Action further rejects claims 12 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over '428 in view of McIntyre et al. (U.S. 6,549,194); and rejects claim 15 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over '428 in view of '919 and further in view of Noguchi et al. (U.S. 6,707,387). The Office Action asserts that with respect to claims 12 and 16, '428 teaches each claimed feature except for the display screen which functions as the operation member, and the display screen having a touch panel input mechanism, which are allegedly each taught by McIntyre. The Office Action also asserts that '428 in view of '919 teaches each feature of claim 15 except for rotation around a third axis, which is allegedly taught by Noguchi. It would thus allegedly have been obvious to have combined Jaeger and McIntyre at the time of the invention in order to obtain the features of claims 12 and 16; and to have combined Noguchi with '428 and '919 in order to obtain the features of claim 15. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections.

As discussed above, instant independent claim 1, from which claims 12, 15 and 16 depend, recites "member drive control means for driving the operation member." McIntyre discloses a touch screen for entering a P.I.N; and Noguchi describes a rotatable dial having a multidimensional switch protruding therefrom. Nowhere do any of these references teach or suggest the claimed member drive control means. Accordingly, there would have been no motivation or suggestion to combine references because doing so would not have obtained the features of claims 12, 15 and 16 at the time of the invention.

For at least the foregoing reasons, claims 11-16 are patentable over the cited references. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are earnestly solicited.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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